



# The Flash Paper

July, 2019

Bob Gehringer, Editor



## Presidential Ponderings

As you might have heard by now, the University of Nebraska at Omaha would like for us as a club to begin holding some of our monthly meetings on their campus in the new Community Engagement Center right off Dodge Street between the bell

tower on one side and the UNO library on the other. By visiting our club's website and clicking on the UNO tab at the top of our homepage, you can take a virtual tour of the facility for yourself. Your OMS board unanimously recommends we explore this opportunity by meeting there for our September club meeting on Monday night, September 16th. The theme of the meeting is Close-Up Magic - seemingly ideal for recruiting interested UNO students and seeing the inside of the building first hand. With June of this year being my thirty-fifth year of membership in the Society of American Magicians, the evolution of the national magic scene has been an interesting one to observe. Within the past two decades since the arrival of the Masked Magician television specials (1997), exposure of the magician's secrets began on a scale unprecedented in the history of magic. At the same time, YouTube™ was becoming a prime source for new magicians to learn magic. If you knew the name of a trick, you could no doubt discover its secret.

Magicians at the time universally believed this level of exposure would be the death of magic as we knew it. They were probably correct . . . just not quite in the way they thought. Instead when one set of secrets were exposed, new methods were invented. National talent

competitions were won by magicians, and a series of postage stamps were published by The United States government declaring to all that magic was now officially an "Art." Slowly it began to dawn on thinking magicians the world over that magic was not a closed system as once thought but rather an open system with an unlimited number of magic tricks capable of being invented. We no longer had to protectively huddle over what we had perceived as a small collection of secrets. Generosity of knowledge to the seriously interested was possible - confidently knowing that the vastness of magic's pool of knowledge was unlimited. The scarcity mentality began to dissipate and an abundance mentality began to take its place.

The OMS board sees both pros and cons of holding some of our meetings during the year on the UNO campus. One of the pros is the alluring potential of bringing

us closer to the generation that we believe needs to experience the fact that YouTube™ videos will never compete with the relationship of a personal mentoring relationship with another more experienced magician and all the benefits that includes (i.e. the immediacy of feedback and the coaching around routining and not just moves). The board now desires to hear your feedback, questions, or concerns sent either to their emails (published elsewhere in this newsletter) or in person.





## Club Meeting June 17, 2019

“The Golden Age of Magic” has historically been used to describe the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century—a period of time in which the Art of Magic experienced tremendous growth and popularity across the globe. Special theaters were built and dedicated to the performance of magic; huge illusion shows—with teams of elephants, tigers, and stage hands—toured the globe; and great magicians, with names like **Okito**, **Thurston**, and **Houdini** sat in a private sitting room in Omaha, Nebraska to collaborate about the impossible. They passed around an empty teakettle and held it to their ear as it whispered magical secrets they would never forget.

There are those who suggest that The Golden Age of Magic is gone for good and that there is nothing we can do to bring it back. But there are times, as I sit in our monthly club meetings, that I get a tiny glimpse of **Abbott’s** sitting room and its magical collaborative atmosphere. Last night was one of those times.

**Ryan Chandler** started the evening by sharing a wonderful gift with our club members. **Ryan** has recently published a magic book—a book that is both a magic instruction book and a prop you can use to accomplish a wonderful piece of mentalism. The effect is that, by simply thinking of one of the illustrations in the book, an unprepared audience member can divine two randomly selected playing cards and then name the only card in the deck that has been reversed. **Ryan** has infused the effect with layers of dual reality and deception that buries the



Theron Christensen

secret too far away for even the most discerning audience members to find. **Ryan’s** volunteer for the effect was our new friend, **Elliot Thomazin**.

**Ryan** also shared two wonderful chop cup routines with us—the first was created by the great **Don Alan**, and the second was **Ryan’s** original routine. The practice and thought that **Ryan** has invested in this trick-as-old-as-time is inspiring. And his willingness to share his hard work with us is even more moving.



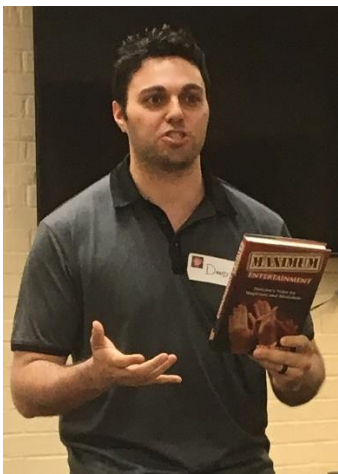
**Neil Bable** followed **Ryan** with his own variation of the Cups and Balls. **Neil’s** routine was very polished and creative. Surprisingly, the three small red balls initially used in the trick were magically replaced by much larger *eyeballs*, and the eyeballs were followed by even larger metallic *eggs*. **Neil** taught us a powerful lesson about collaboration by seeking feedback from the group and adjusting his presentation accordingly.



**Johnny Sheibal** shared a gorgeous card effect with us that he learned from the book *Tricks of My Trade: The Magic of Doug Conn*. A chosen card, lost in the deck, magically finds itself sandwiched between two other cards—twice! But the real surprise comes later when we discover that the chosen card is the only red card in an entire deck of blue backs. Later, **Johnny** asked an important question to the club that I thought was important enough to memorialize. Johnny said that he feels

much more comfortable performing for laypeople than for other magicians. He asked what we can do to make performing for other magicians less stressful. We talked a long time about how much courage and faith it takes to share such powerful magic with other magicians. We talked about building a collaborative and creative culture of trust and friendship. Finally, we talked about how performing for magicians can often be even more fulfilling than performing for laypeople who are so focused on the effect they often do not get to appreciate the clever and artistic methods and presentations we create.

**Dave Arch** passed around one of his very favorite magic books—a book with which many magicians may be unfamiliar: *Magic Digest*, by **George B. Anderson**. Thumbing through the pages, I discovered that the book is plum full of magic for every skill level. There is close-up magic, card magic, magic with silverware, saltshakers, and handkerchiefs, large-scale illusions, manipulation effects, and yes, even mind reading. If you are growing tired of your magic library and looking for a fresh read, I doubt you will go wrong by acquiring a copy of *Magic Digest*—which, incidentally, can be found on Lybrary.com.



**David Michael Fox** then shared three of his favorite books with us: *Maximum Entertainment*, *A Piece of Mind*, and *Confident Deceptions*. He explained how each of the books has impacted his philosophy, his material, and his presentation. If you know David, you already know about his passion for well-designed theater, his obsession with powerful mentalism, and his reverence for technical mastery with a deck

of cards—and I think that the books he shared with us last night speak to these aspects of **David's** magic.

I think, however, that my favorite moment of last night's meeting was when **George Huffaker** stood and described two of his favorite books—*Strong Magic*, by **Darwin Ortiz**, and an unnamed book by Michael Ammar. George told a story about how a well-timed levitation with a borrowed object can often be stronger than an entire show of illusions.

Then **George** paused and took a breath. When he opened his mouth again, he said something very eye-opening. He said that our club has a unique culture of collaboration—a culture of sharing and helping each other improve. He said, "I wish magicians would have been more willing to help each other out when I was starting in magic."

"The Golden Age of Magic was a long time ago," He said, "But for me, the golden age of magic in my life is right here, right now—in the Omaha Magical Society." - **Report by Theron Christensen**

## Dameon Lecture

On July 1 the OMS hosted a lecture by **Hal Meyers** (stage name **DAMEON**). This very hands-on workshop began as participants picked up a white paper lunch sack upon arriving and filled it with balls, cards, rope, and other items that were used throughout the lecture.

For the duration of the presentation, Hal took the time to walk around the room assisting members when needed so that each participant had an opportunity to succeed with whatever was being taught

There were six categories covered: cards, balls, rope, thimbles, doves and a section on setting up for an act. The lecture began with the "BALLS" category where he taught basic rolls and flourishes,



color changes, vanishes, reappearances and gave several tips on palming.

Next up was the "ROPE" category with a very visual disappearing knot move, a variation on the shoelace knot, and presentation tips on the threading the needle trick.

"CARDS" included instructions on how to create your own rising card gimmick, shooting cards, spinning cards, flourishes and much more.

He showed some simple, but impressive moves in "THIMBLES" as well showcasing a new routine using a prop from an unexpected, everyday source.



After the break Hal covered "ACT SET-UP" where he showed us cases, cue sheets, containers and shared a list of those necessary items to have on hand for the inevitable show emergency. Lastly came "DOVES," where he explained about loading doves, various dove harnesses, and his version of Nielsen's vanishing bird cage.

Many good comments from members who attended, and as club president **Dave Arch** put it, "It was inspiring to see someone so proficient in our craft and able to explain why he does what he does in the manner in which he does it."

**Report by Steve Nespor**



My summers can be pretty busy and I'm afraid I wasn't able to attend our last meeting or lecture. A big "Thank You" to **Theron Christensen** and **Steve Nespor** for filling in and giving reviews in my stead.

It's an exciting time to be a part of the Omaha Magical Society! Our numbers are growing and we're exploring options with U.N.O. that would give us access to their wonderful meeting facilities for some of our club meetings. There are also great changes being made to the FlashPaper that I'm sure you'll enjoy.

In S.A.M. news, please join me in welcoming our newest National President, Steve Spence. Steve was my 2nd National Vice President when I held office and I can tell you that he's one of the hardest working people I know. He's also been working on a book about the history of the S.A.M. that I hope will be printed during his time in office.

Finally...HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE LINE-UP AT THE S.A.M. CONVENTION IN JANUARY??? Holy cow...it's incredible. **Mac King, The Amazing Jonathan, Chris Kenner (Copperfield's executive producer), Stephen Bargatze, Piff the Magic Dragon, Nick Diffatte, Mike Hammer, Mat Franco, Fielding West, Juliana Chen, Rudy Colby**...the list goes on and on. Plus, there's a dealer's room with over 20 magic dealers.

It's January 18-21 at the Golden Nugget Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas (SUPER CHEAP ROOMS!) So, you have a choice...freeze in Omaha or warm up with some of the hottest magic in the world in Vegas. It's going to be a great time!

S.Y.M. Assembly #Y144 is going strong! Our meetings are attended by about a dozen members



each month, which is FANTASTIC for summer. Usually we see numbers dwindle this time of year. Our next meeting should be a fun one. We're encouraging our members to perform at this meeting. It can be something they've learned during one of our meetings or something they've picked up on their own. We want to remind our members that magic is a *performing* art and give them an opportunity to try their routines in a safe, friendly environment.

Both Steve and I are very proud of our young members. Their enthusiasm is contagious and several of them have shown a flair for showmanship. It's great to see their skills blossom.

-Jeff Sikora



In July two videos were added to the OMS club's online video library. The first is a tutorial for routining The Chop Cup. In addition to his own proven handlings of the cup, OMS member Ryan Chandler included two classic routines from Don Alan and one from Paul Daniels. Also, Dave Arch contributed his handling of Robert Neale's *The Swindler, The Skill, and My Uncle* from Neale's book *Tricks Of The Imagination*. This version of the gambling routine with a chain typically called Fast and Loose is performed with a loop of rope not on a table top but rather up in the performer's hands for all to see and includes the involvement of a couple spectators in a mini playlet/melodrama. Suitable for close-up or platform with an intermediate skill rating. If you're a paid OMS member and don't have credentials for the library, please contact us through the club's website.



Each month our club's membership grows. With each new member, there's also a new challenge to provide resources for that member regardless of their magic interest/passion niche (i.e. performing, collecting, serious mentalism, challenging card or coin sleights, etc.).

The fact that we are attracting an increasing amount of people who don't live in the Omaha/Council Bluffs area also encouraged us to provide an online platform for our members to use in connecting with others of like passion.

To view a video that might spark ideas for using this new resource to grow in your own magic interest area visit <https://theomahamagicalsociety.org/learning-center>

2019	OMS	Officers
<b>President</b>	– Dave Arch	.....( <a href="mailto:dave@sandler.com">dave@sandler.com</a> )
<b>Vice President</b>	– David Fox...	( <a href="mailto:hotsy@windstream.net">hotsy@windstream.net</a> )
<b>Secretary</b>	– Jeff Sikora.....	( <a href="mailto:jqmagic@cox.net">jqmagic@cox.net</a> )
<b>Treasurer</b>	– Bob Gehringer.....	( <a href="mailto:gehringerr@cox.net">gehringerr@cox.net</a> )
<b>Sgt.-at-Arms</b>	– Neil Bable.....	( <a href="mailto:rutiger@hotmail.com">rutiger@hotmail.com</a> )
<b>Flash Paper photographer</b> – Neil Bable		

**Check out our website:**  
<http://TheOmahaMagicalSociety.org>



## What's Your Magic Story?

by Steve Nespor

This month I'd like to tell you about one of our newest members, **Elliott Thomazin**. He will only

be with us until this Fall when he heads off to Notre Dame for college.

**Elliott** has been interested in magic since childhood, but his interest was really piqued while watching an episode of America's Got Talent when "Smoothini," a Bar Magician who eventually made it to the semi-finals, performed close-up for the judges using cards, sponge balls and salt. It was his salt pour that really captured Elliott's attention.

Living in Columbus, Nebraska did not afford Elliott with many opportunities to watch magicians perform live so he began searching the internet, watching television shows, and seeking out online venues to learn more. The first trick he learned was a Two Card Monte that he found on a YouTube video. After studying and practicing it, he showed a friend and was hooked from that point.

But make no mistake, this young man is not the average amateur enthusiast who learned a couple of things from the internet and stopped with that. When talking with him about who some of his influences have been, he is quick to mention magicians like **Juan Tamariz** and **Asi Wind** who he has studied and admires. With role models like that, it is easy to see why his style and thinking are so developed and why he strives for intentional actions in his performances.

His overall style preference is close-up magic and he is partial to performing for adult audiences. He

routinely performs a close-up show in conjunction with a healthy eating class his mother teaches. If you go to <https://bit.ly/ElliottT> you can watch a short clip of his close-up act.

When asked what prompted him to start making the 90-minute trek from Columbus to Omaha, he points to the human connection that a club provides. He feels it is important to meet and talk with other like-minded individuals and enjoys being around clever, creative people who can offer suggestions or approaches that he may not have considered. He really values the give-and-take that happens at magic club gatherings.

Take a moment to talk with him the next time you see him at a meeting before he heads off to college. It will be time well spent.





## Where to Catch Club Members Performing

### Joe Cole's Schedule.

**Sunday** - Good Life Bar (Elkhorn) 6 -8pm

**Monday** - Good Life Bar (180th and Pacific) 6 to 8pm

**Tuesday** - Upstream (Downtown) 7 to 9pm

**Wednesday** - Fernando's (114th and Dodge) 6 to 8pm

**Thursday** - Upstream (Downtown) 7 to 9pm

**Saturday** - Fernando's (76th and Pacific) 6 to 8pm

You can also see it here:

<http://omahamagic.com/weekly-shows/>



### Ryan Chandler's Schedule

I have all my upcoming public shows posted at

<https://www.oldmarketmagician.com/shows>

### Theron Milo



SAT, JUL 20 AT 1 PM

Fun Family Magic Show with Theron Milo

INTERESTED

I've got a public show at **The Comedy Loft** in Lincoln at 1pm on July 20th.

\$10 per person, tickets at [comedyloft.club](http://comedyloft.club)



### Jeff Sikora

I'll be at the **Douglas Co. Fair** at Village Pointe at 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 13th.



**Boys Town Great Hall - 13747 Flanagan Blvd.**

## **Magic Club Picnic & Magic Show August 10, 2019 Noon – 2:00 p.m.**

Each year we have a Magic Club Picnic **for our members' families and friends**. At the picnic, we host some of the young kids from Boys Town at their fabulous Great Hall as a community service event. (No need to worry about rain or excessive heat.) We put on a show with some of our members performing for about 7 minutes each. A stage and microphone will be provided. We also will have some of us walking around demonstrating close-up magic as everyone arrives. The kids love it. Here is a chance to try out a couple of your routines in this great setting. The club provides chicken, potato salad, and drinks.

**We ask members to bring a dessert, side dish or chips to enhance our meal.**

**R.S.V.P. to Bob Gehring so we know how much food to prepare.**

**Phone: 402 334-8440 or email: [gehringerr@cox.net](mailto:gehringerr@cox.net)**

**Close-Up - Amjad Alawimari, George Huffaker, Shayden Olson & John Sheibal**

**Stage Show - Steve Nespor, Ryan Chandler, Dave Arch, Steve Lindeman & Theron Christensen**

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